UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting 5/05 held at 1:30pm on Thursday, 6 October 2005 in the Faculty Meeting Room, in 39.150A.

PRESENT: Prof D Steel (Chair), A/Prof I Burnett, Dr G Cox, Prof J Fulcher, Mr A Krishna, A/Prof T Marchant, A/Prof F Naghdy, Mr C Peden, Prof R Safavi-Naini and A/Prof M Zhang.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Oborn.

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS
   1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence
       Apologies were received from: Prof S Bouzerdoum and Mr T Coltman.

   1.2 Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of 18 August 2005
       The minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2005 were confirmed.

   1.3 Business Arising from Previous Meeting
       There was no business arising.

       The Chair publicly thanked Kristine Sheridan for her effort and support to the committee over the past 3.5 years.

2. REPORT FROM CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT
   2.1 FIRDS Update
       The Chair tabled a two page summary of FIRDS allocations for 2005 and explained the rationale for the allocation of $15,000 to 11 Near Miss applications and $14,449 to 6 direct applications.

       It was noted that A/Prof Fazel Naghdy’s successful ARC Linkage application had been inadvertently omitted from the FIRDS list.

   2.2 Research Quality Framework
       The Chair reported that an RQF preferred model had been distributed but was not very informative. From 2007, a panel of experts similar to the ARC will review submissions. Research groups comprising a minimum of 4 or 5 members will be put forward for funding. Panel will be looking for four quality research outputs and quality impact outputs per member for the previous period which is likely to be 2001-06 or 2002-06. Potential members for the groups will be ranked based on impact and quality, to achieve the highest possible ranking for each group put forward. The Chair noted that some university funding (up to $12m) was at risk under this process.
The committee discussed the makeup, quality and impact of groups and whether consultancies would become less important as there was no mention of funding in the model.

2.3 Revised FRC Membership
To note, the inclusion as an FRC member of Mr Craig Peden, Faculty Manager of Innovation and Commercial Development.

2.4 Successful Grants
The Chair reported that faculty staff have recently been successful in securing a number of funding grants:
- Four UIC Grants
  - Salim Bouzerdoum
  - Eryk Dutkiewicz and Xiaojing Huang
  - David Steel and Robert Clark
  - Philip Ogunbona and Wanqing Li
- 10 URC Small Grants involving the following Informatics faculty staff
  - Willy Susilo and Khin Than Win
  - Kwan-Wu Chin
  - James McCoy
  - Prashan Premaratne
  - Christian Ritz
  - Robert Clark
  - Zhiqian Zhou
  - Koren Ward
  - Yan-Xia Lin
  - Chris Hawley

The committee discussed the merits of allocating a small amount of funding to those applicants who did not receive a URC grant. It was agreed to give $2-3k to those applications which the committee considered deserving of funding.

3. REPORT FROM POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH POLICY COMMITTEE (PRPC)
There was no report from this committee.

4. REPORTS FROM FRC WORKING PARTIES AND STANDING COMMITTEES

4.1 Postgraduate Research Coordination Standing Committee
No meeting has been held since last FRC meeting.

4.2 Industry and Community Linkages Standing Committee
The Chair reported that:
- no meeting has been held since last FRC meeting.
- the number of ARC Linkage Project applications has risen to two.
- he and the MICD will conduct an informal forum on 17 October, to discuss the next two rounds of ARC Linkage applications.
- an Early Career Researchers meeting is to be held on 17 October.
The Chair tabled a listing of all Linkage Grant applications over the past three years to give an idea on the organizations that the faculty could be interacting or collaborating with.

Mr Craig Peden (MICD) reported that:
- John Warren, (Microsoft Research Asia), has started to show some interest in the capabilities within the faculty, with a view to giving the faculty the opportunity to apply for Microsoft grants.
- he would like to pitch to large local multi-nationals who may be interested in funding collaborative research.
- he is currently constructing an internal profile of research excellence.
- the University Linkage Grant Scheme has matching funding available for new partnerships projects; URC willing to contribute approximately $10k per project.
- industry partners wanting to conduct preliminary work must also contribute funding towards the project. A Linkage grant can then be applied for to further the research project.
- FIRDS can be used for travel to visit prospective partners and further discuss collaboration.
- it is important to identify those likely to be able to provide funds and develop strong relationships with them, as it is unproductive talking to lots of groups.
- packaging small projects into one larger project with different partners is another avenue to consider.

4.3 HDR Student Recruitment and Support Working Group

There was no report from this working group.

4.4 Impact and Quality Working Group

There was no report from this working group.

4.5 Internationalisation of Research Working Group

There was no report from this working group, although the successes with UIC was relevant.

5. HDR SCHOLARSHIP RANKING PROCESS

The Chair noted that the closing date for applications has been brought forward from 31 October to 30 September, however, applications received up to 31 October will be considered. A meeting to rank scholarship applications has been scheduled for Thursday, 3 November.

The Chair outlined the process for ranking HDR International scholarships. Faculty is to provide the top five ranked applications for consideration by URSC who will produce a list of six ranked and six reserves, campus wide.

The Chair impressed upon the committee that applicants must:
- have two referees reports
- be good students
- have a good supervisor with a track record but not necessarily in a research strength provided that the research was seen as strategic
The Chair advised that:
• applications will not be considered if they are not up to standard. Owing to the number of applications received, any reason to not consider will probably be employed.
• Australian 1st Class Hons students are no longer guaranteed a scholarship and that it is important to highlight anything that distinguishes a student from others.

The Chair tabled the Supervisor’s Declaration and discussed the document and its requirements.

The Chair advised the committee that the deadline for return of applications and ranking sheets is noon on Tuesday 1 November.

A short discussion about Supervisors, Co-Supervisors and accommodating early career researchers without PhD completions took place.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

7. NEXT MEETING
Thursday 3 November, 2005 in Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39/105A.
Please Note that HDR Scholarship applications will be ranked at this meeting.

Professor David Steel
Chair